Dharna/Agitation Programme at Ghat-kopar Railway Station, Bombay

3006. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some Dharna/agitation programme was held outside the Ghatkopar Railway Station in Bombay in February, 1994 for providing better railway services and amenities;

(b) if so, the details of this agitation and the demands of the agitators;

(c) what steps have been taken on these demands; and

(d) by when the Central Railway administration propose to introduce more Ghatkopar local trains and make Ghatkopar into a Suburban Railway Terminal?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. On 23.2.94 about 25 activists of Janata Party under the leadership of Shri Ifterkar Khan (Chairman Janata Party, North East Bombay Unit) staged one day dharna in front of Ghatkopar Railway station/West to press for their following 9 demands:

1. Make Ghatkopar into a Suburban Railway terminal and introduce more Ghatkopar locals.

2. Increase facilities/services and modernise the system. Do not increase Rail fare.

3. Halt long distance trains at Ghatkopar.

4. Improve facilities at the new Kurla Terminal.

5. Install Computer Railway booking at Ghatkopar and New Bombay.

6. Introduce Double Decker Local train and introduce more 12 bogie trains.

7. Make Bombay Area (Central and Western Railway) into one new Suburban Zone with General Manager.

8. Construct new Bridges (ROB & FOB) at important places.

9. Widen the road over bridge/M.G. Road South of Ghatkopar Station.

(c) Action taken on the demands is as under:

1. It is not operationally desirable to have a full fledged terminal at Ghatkopar as Kurla Terminal is only 3.91 Km. away and having another terminal in immediate vicinity will reduce the line capacity which is already saturated. 33 additional suburban services have been provided serving Ghatkopar during 1994-95 (upto July, 94) in addition to 4 Ghatkopar locals already available.

2. Facilities commensurate with the volume of passenger traffic handled already exist at Ghatkopar. Further augmentation of the facilities will be taken up when so warranted by the growth in traffic. Rail fare is increased marginally to partially offset the increase in the cost of inputs, keeping the interest of ordinary passengers in view.

3. Stoppege of long distance trains at Ghatkopar not found operationally feasible.

4. A phase-wise programme for the development of Kurla Terminal has been formulated.

5. In new Bombay area a computer terminal is already available at Belapur. As for Ghatkopar, there is no proposal to provide the facility of computerised reservation office as the nearby stations like Thane and Kurla have got this facility.

6. There are no double decker local trains, as these are not suitable for suburban operation. Facilities for introduction of additional 12 Car rakes in service are yet to be developed.

7. The matter relating to creation/ reorganisation of zones is under study and examination.

8. The system of replacing a busy level crossing by a Raod over/under bridge is that the State Governments propose the

works giving priorities. The Railways then examine the cases and include such of them in the Works Programme for which the various prerequisit formalities have been completed by the State Governments.

9. The work of widening road over bridge at Ghatkopar is in planning stage to be executed on. 'deposit' terms.

(d) There is no such proposal at present.

Percentage of VIP (Emergency) Rail Accommodation Quota

3007. SHRI RAMNATH KOVIND: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the percentage of VIP (Emergency) Rail Accommodation Quota Class-wise in various Mail and Express Trains;

(b) how much time before departure of the train the unutilised quota is surrendered for general allotment;

(c) What measures are adopted by the Railways to ensure that unutilised VIP/ Emergency Quota Accommodation is not cornored by travel agents to detriment of General public interest; and

(d) what guidelines are adopted to ensure that the staff at Railway Headquarters do not misuse this quota?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C,K, JAFFER SHARIEF): (a) A limited number of berths/seats have been earmarked as Emergency Quota which differ from train to train and station to station.

(b) to (d) The Emergency quota is released by the nominated officers as per the prescribed instructions and the unutilised portion of the Emergency Quota is allotted to the RAC and wait-listed passengers at the time of preparation of charts. In the computerised reservation system the computer automatically releases the unutilised quota to RAC/Wait-listed passengers. Besides, surprise checks are also conducted from time to time to ensure that unutilised quota is released to the RAC/Wait-listed passengers in order of their priority.

Rail Accidents

3008. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of rail accidents that took place in the country during the last two months',

(b) what is the number of persons killed/injured in these accidents;

(c) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to have insurance coverages to the passengers; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF): (a) 86 train accidents took place on the Zonal Railways during the months of June and July' 94.

(b) 36 persons lost their lives and 143 sustained injuries in these accidents.

(c) and (d) The Insurance Scheme for the bonafide rail passengers as envisaged in the Railways (Amendment) Act, 1994 has already been implemented with effect from 01.08.1994. Under this scheme, Railways will pay compensation for loss of life or injuries to bonafide passengers holding tickets or pass including railway-men on duty who become victims of untoward incidents such as terrorist acts, violent attack, robbery ordacoity, rioting, shootout or arson by any person in or on any train carrying passengers, or in a waiting hall, cloak room or reservation or booking office or on any platform or in any place within the precincts of a railway station or the accidental falling of any passenger from a train carrying passengers.